

STAFF HEARING OFFICER STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE:

April 4, 2006

AGENDA DATE:

April 12, 2006

PROJECT ADDRESS: 155 Camino Alto (MST2005-00583)

TO:

Staff Hearing Officer

FROM:

Planning Division, (805) 564-5470

Danny Kato, Zoning & Enforcement Supervisor

Roxanne Milazzo, Associate Planner

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The existing 40,489 square foot lot is currently developed with a 2,519 s.f. residence and a detached storage shed. The proposed project involves a 597 s.f. addition, a 370 s.f. workshop and a 697 s.f. detached garage. The current owners purchased the property recently, and in the course of upgrading the property, discovered several undocumented improvements, for which they are requesting approval.

II. REQUIRED APPLICATIONS

The discretionary applications required for this project are:

- 1. A Modification to allow the required open yard to be provided in the remaining front vard (SBMC §28.15.060);
- "As-built" pool equipment to remain in the required and remaining front yards (SBMC 2. §28.15.060);
- "As-built" chain link fence to remain within 10 feet of the front lot line near the pool 3. (SBMC §28.87.170);
- 4. "As-built" chain link fence to remain within 10 feet of a driveway and within 20 feet of the front lot line (SBMC §28.87.170).

Date Application Accepted: March 14, 2006 Date Action Required: June 12, 2006

SITE INFORMATION AND PROJECT STATISTICS III.

Α. SITE INFORMATION

Applicant:

Brian Milburn, Architect

Property Owner: Greg Rech

Parcel Number:

019-121-010

Lot Area:

40,489 sq. ft.

General Plan:

Residential: 1 Unit/Acre

Zoning:

A-1 Single-Family Residential

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Existing Use:

Residence

Topography:

19.9 %

Adjacent Land Uses:

North - Residential South - Residential East - Residential West - Residential

B. PROJECT STATISTICS

	Existing	Proposed
Living Area	2,519 sq ft	3,486 sq ft
Garage	0 sq ft	694 sq ft
Accessory Space	254 sq ft detached	370 sq ft attached

IV. ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY

Standard	Requirement/ Allowance	Existing	Proposed
Setbacks			
-Front	35	27	28
-Interior	15	15	15
-Rear	15	6	6
Building Height	30	20' 6"	20' 6"
Parking	2 covered	2 uncovered	2 covered
Open Yard	1,250 sq. ft	> 1,250 sq. ft.	> 1,250 sq ft.

V. DISCUSSION

This project was reviewed by the ABR/HLC on five separate occasions (meeting minutes are attached as Exhibit C). On April 3, 2006, the ABR/HLC stated that the project was ready for revised preliminary approval and the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance findings could be made. On September 19, 2005, the Board stated the following: 1) Given the large size of the site, the additions are acceptable. 3) The existing encroachments are small in scale and of one-story nature. 4) The Board finds there are no aesthetic visual impacts.

A majority of the property is front yard, adjacent to either Camino Viejo or Conejo Drive. The front yard to the southeast functions as the open yard area, with the pool and other outdoor amenities. The pool equipment is about 28 feet from the front lot line, about 44 feet from the street pavement, and 12 feet higher that the street elevation. The area between the pool equipment and the street heavily wooded, so the equipment is not visible from the street. Similarly, the fences are about 16 feet from the street pavement, and are located within the heavily vegetated area. The improvements that are being presented for Modification approval have existed in their present location since the mid-1950s, and may have been approved in the field, as was the practice back in the day.

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VI. RECOMMENDATION/FINDING

Staff recommends that the Staff Hearing Officer approve the project, making the findings that:

- A. The improvements have existed in their current location since the mid-1950s, and may have been approved without documentation at that time; the fences do not pose a safety hazard, and are located within a heavily vegetated area at least 16 feet from the pavement; the pool equipment cannot be seen from the street, and is 44 feet from the street pavement; and the southeastern front yard serves as the open yard area.
- **B.** The Modification is consistent with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance; and
- C. The Modification is necessary to secure an appropriate improvement on the lot.

Exhibits:

- A. Site Plan
- B. Applicant's letter, March 20, 2006
- C. Owner's letter, March 19, 2006
- D. ABR/HLC Minutes

Contact/Case Planner: Roxanne Milazzo, Associate Planner (rmilazzo@SantaBarbaraCA.gov)
630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Phone: (805)564-5470





March 20, 2006

Betty Weiss City Planner Planning Department City of Santa Barbara 630 Garden Street Santa Barbara, CA 93101

J. Allen Zimmer, A.I.A. Gregory C. Rech, A.I.A. architects

Re:

Modifications

155 Camino Alto APN: 019-121-010

Dear Ms. Weiss

On behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Milburn I am requesting four modifications for the property at 155 Camino Alto due to existing site constraints. The Milburn's recently purchased the house and property with the desire to remodel and improve the existing residence. The requests for all of these modifications are derived from development and construction completed by the previous owner.

The first modification is to allow the required open yard area to be located in front of the existing house. The existing home and pool area are located a minimum of 14 feet above Conejo Road and as can be seen from the site survey (A1.2) and the proposed site plan (A1.3). The developed area is appropriately well back from the edge of the hillside. Because of the unusual characteristics of the site, the front yard was originally developed as a rear yard would be in a traditional arrangement. Neither the house nor the pool area nor the open yard area are visible from the street. In fact, the existing home is so far back that there has never been a traditional rear yard. (Photo 1) Because of the location and orientation of the historical development on this property I am requesting a modification to allow the open yard area to be located in the front yard.

The second modification would allow the existing pool equipment to remain in its present location which straddles the front setback line. The property is unusual because it is bounded on two sides by Camino Alto and on the third by Conejo Road. The front yard setback extends around three of the four sides of the property. The pool and equipment location were installed with a permit issued in December 1957. While according to City staff, the pool equipment was not installed in the location shown with the permit, it has existed at this location for almost 50 years. None of the equipment is visible from the street and moving it back 3'-6" would not move it any farther from the closest neighbor at 121 Camino Alto. (Photo 2) Moving the equipment would only add expense for the owners and turn a perfectly function concrete slab into waste. Therefore I am requesting a modification to allow the existing pool equipment to remain in its current location.



1530 Chapala St. Santa Barbara California, 93101 p: 805|966.7141 f: 805|564.4121



The third issue involves the existing chain link fence that encloses the pool along the front property line southeast of the pool area. From the zoning research I have conducted, I do not believe that a modification is necessary for this existing fence. As noted in the previous paragraph, the permit was issued in December 1957 for the pool and enclosure fence. City Ordinance 2585 was approved in January 1957 and Section 22.17 A and B of this ordinance reads:

"A. In the A, E and R zones, no fence, screen, wall or hedge located in the required front, rear or side yards shall exceed a height of eight (8) feet.

B. In the A, E and R zones, no fence, screen, wall or hedge located within ten (10) feet of a street line, and within ten (10) feet of a driveway shall exceed a height of three and one-half (3½) feet."

Section 22.17 A allows an 8 foot fence along the front property line. In the more restrictive Section 22.17 B it can then be understood that the "street line" referred to is the edge of pavement since this section makes no reference to property line or street right-of-way lines. The existing fence at 155 Camino Alto is 10 feet from the street line. While the existing chain link fence enclosing the pool is not constructed in the location shown on the plot plan for the pool, it is clear that the previous owner must have elected during construction to enclose the entire property because that is where the fence exists and there is no evidence that a fence was ever constructed as shown on the plot plan. We do not know what conversations may have taken place between the previous owner and City inspectors, but we do know that field changes occurred much more frequently during the late 1950's than they do today. In any case, the fence in its present location was allowed per City Ordinance at that time, therefore I am requesting that the fence be declared existing, non-conforming.

If a modification is necessary, the third modification would allow the existing chain link fence that encloses the pool to remain along the front property line southeast of the pool area. This fence must be maintained for the safety and security of the pool. The fence itself is well above Camino Alto and is not visible from the street because of dense vegetation that has grown on it over the years. (Photos 3 and 4) Removing the existing fence and the vegetation that conceals it, then replacing the fence ten feet back from the front property line would create a visual nuisance for the owners, surrounding neighbors and anyone using Camino Alto. The fence has been in place for nearly 50 years, provides the necessary protection, and is very well screened.

There is an example of solid block entry walls directly adjacent from the existing chain link fence that are much closer to Camino Alto and much more visible from the street. These solid block entry walls at 130 Camino Alto have been granted a modification. (Photo 5) The City has granted a use to these neighbors that benefits their property by allowing visible walls higher than 3'-6" near their front property line while it would require the current owners at 155 Camino Alto to remove a chain link fence that is further from the street and is not visible. If necessary, I am requesting a modification to grant the owners a use enjoyed by their neighbors and to allow the fence to be maintained in its present location.

PLANNING DIVISION



The fourth modification would allow a portion of the chain link fence to remain in its present location adjacent to the driveway on the property. The street has very little vehicular traffic (Photo 6) and because of the steep existing driveway from the property, cars entering Camino Alto enter the street more slowly than at a typical intersection. Relocating the fence line along the driveway would not improve visibility for drivers entering Camino Alto. (Photo 7) As stated in the previous paragraph, neighbors at 130 Camino Alto have approved solid block entry walls extending much closer to the actual edge of road paving. (Photo 5) Therefore, I am requesting a modification to grant the owners a use enjoyed by their neighbors and to allow the fence to be maintained in its present location adjacent to their driveway.

Thank you for your consideration. The Millburn's and I look forward to discussing these modifications requests with you during your site visit. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Gregory C. Rech AIA

Architects West

Att: 1. Supporting photographs

2. Letter from property owner

Milburn Modification 4.doc



223 CONEJO ROAD SANTA BARBARA, CA 93103 PH 805, 568,5415 • FAX 805, 568,5414 E-MAIL: BRIAN@MILBURNS.NET

BRIAN MILBURN

Sunday, March 19, 2006

Betty Weiss City Planner Planning Department City of Santa Barbara 630 Garden Street Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Re:

Modifications 155 Camino Alto APN: 019-121-010

Dear Ms. Weiss

It is my belief that the City requiring modifications for the existing fence may be in error. I base these beliefs on the fact that evidence supports that the existing fence surrounding the property was installed legally and was most likely field approved. This conclusion is based on the following:

- 1. I purchased the property from the son and heir of the original owner who commissioned the construction. I specifically inquired about the existing fence and was told that it had been in place since the home was built.
- 2. Although the pool plan shows a fence in a different location, it is obvious that this was penciled in, probably at the counter, and was shown not as a design element, but rather as a typical requirement as no other fence was shown on the construction plans. This was probably done by the plan checker or pool contractor to expedite obtaining the permit.
- 3. There is no evidence on the property that the fence shown on the pool plan was ever built, and the former owner knows nothing about any fence ever existing on the property other than the current fence.
- 4. The pool plan specifies that "final approval will be given upon completion and final inspection". The wording is such that it was undoubtedly added by the plan checker, and in adding this wording he was indicating that he was approving a marked up plan and was deferring to the field inspector for final approval. This was extremely common up to the mid 70's.
- 5. Because a fence surrounding a swimming pool was required even in the 50's, and because there is no evidence that any other fence was ever built, the only reasonable conclusion one can draw is that the final location of the fence, in the location it exists today, was approved by the field inspector. It would be

- inconceivable that the field inspector would approve a final inspection and allow occupancy without a properly installed fence.
- 6. The permits for the house and the pool were issued within 4 days of each other. The obvious reason for this would be that they wanted to dig the pool at the same time they performed the grading. The street file records indicate that the grading was completed on December 31, 1957, just 18 days after the pool permit was issued so it seems likely that the pool excavation was included in the grading work. It is likely that the pool construction was commenced at the same time of the house construction or even earlier because as the rainy season arrived, time was of the essence. It is also likely that the pool was completed before the house was completed. Because the pool would have to be filled when it was plastered, it likely contained water well before the house construction was completed. Electrical wiring for the pool lights and branch circuits and conduits for the pool equipment are original and were not added later on. The pool contractor was Bartholomay Pools, a well known and respected pool contractor of the day. It would be unlikely that they would fill the pool before the area was properly fenced. It is therefore completely logical to assume that the existing fence was installed well before the completion of the house.

I began my career in the construction business in 1969. I worked as an unlicensed self employed contractor from 1971 to 1975. I obtained my B1 general contractors license in 1975. In the years between 1969 and the early 80's I obtained many building permits for projects in the City of Santa Barbara. The scope of these projects ranged from simple fences to single family houses, to commercial buildings.

The permit approval and building inspection process was considerably more "casual" than it is today. Permits for new residential construction were frequently issued over the counter or within a few days at most. In the early 70's, the chief plan checker for the City was a gentleman named Fred Bondy. I can attest from personal experience that a contractor such as myself could call Mr. Bondy and obtain approvals for plan changes over the phone. Most of the time, there was the understanding that the contractor would come in and pencil in the changes on the plans, but this was frequently "overlooked".

I can also attest from personal experience that great latitude was afforded to field inspectors. Plans were frequently marked "to be approved by field inspector". As no ABR or zoning reviews were required for residential construction at the time, it was up to the field inspector to approve setbacks, building locations, fence locations, etc. in the field. It was extremely common for the field inspector to verify conditions and approve items based on his opinion of their suitability for the purpose rather than on strict interpretation of ordinances as is done today. Their interpretation of requirements was more of a common sense approach that a literal interpretation. It was extremely common for a field inspector to approve an alternative or unspecified improvement or change based simply on his opinion as to whether or not it fulfilled the necessary requirement.



MAR 2 1 2006

In conclusion, it seems extremely likely that the existing fence was the only fence ever built. Because a fence was <u>required</u> for final approval in this case, it is even more likely that this was field approved by an authorized building inspector. Any small discrepancies between as built conditions and the governing ordinance at the time would be easily explained by the wide degree of latitude given to field inspectors. Additionally, the governing ordinance at the time used the edge of pavement or street line as the basis for determining a front yard setback for fences. The road as it exists today has been overlaid at least twice and slurry sealed many times over the past 50 years. The edge of pavement in 1957 was very likely further towards the center of the road.

One other item to keep in mind was that inspectors frequently allowed average setbacks to be used for fences and even structures, especially on larger, more rural properties. This kept with the spirit of the ordinance but allowed minor variations for terrain, mature landscaping and trees and other on-site conditions. I know this to be fact, because I myself received numerous field approvals from building inspectors in the 70's.

It is very difficult to maintain the argument that the fence was not approved in its' current state. The only evidence that exists that any other configuration was even ever considered is the pool plan, however it cannot be determined whether or not the owner or architect ever knew about the penciled in fence location. The plan checker clearly deferred to the field inspector, and all the other evidence indicates that it is highly likely that the field inspector approved the fence in its current location, and that these types of field approvals were the rule rather than the exception. At the time, the fence in its current configuration was legal and it was completely within the prevue of the field inspector to allow its installation to satisfy the legal requirements for enclosing a pool area.

As you will see when you visit the property, Mrs. Dowling, the original owner, paid a great deal of attention to creating a tropical atmosphere and maintaining the ocean view corridor. Any fence that obscured the view and hampered the design on the open yard feeling would have been completely out of character with the design of the house.

Thank you, and we appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brian Milburn

Brian Milburn







ALL ACTIVITIES SUMMARY

155 CAMINO ALTO

MST2005-00583

R-ADDITION

08/30/05

This is a revised project: Proposal to add 597 square feet to an existing 2,519 square foot single family residence on a 40,489 square foot lot in the Hillside Design District. Also proposed is the demolition of an existing 254 square foot workshop and a new 370 square foot workshop and a new 694 square foot attached garage.

Activities: Disp Date 1 Date 2 Date 3

This is a revised project: Proposal to add 597 square feet to an existing 2,519 square foot single family residence on a 40,489 square foot lot in the Hillside Design District. Also proposed is the demolition of an existing 254 square foot workshop and a new 370 square foot workshop and a new 694 square foot attached garage.

Status: Design Review Preliminary Approval

ABR-Consent (Final Review)

Application Received

Date 2

Date 2

Date 3

PEND

08/26/05

PLCK

08/30/05

Prelim Plan Check - Zoning

Preliminary Plan Check by Brenda Beltz 564-5470

- 1. ABR required NPO #5. The applicant submitted a slope calculation showing that the slope is 19.9%, however as it is not stamped/signed by the engineer, the slope is still 21% for our records. The project requires ABR because NPO #13 as well.
- 2. Project Data OK
- 3. Grading OK
- 4. Residential Density OK
- 5. Measure E Floor Area N/A
- 6. Setbacks Explain/provide details of the three ponds, tank filter, and concrete paving(?) located in the setbacks. Any structure over 10" in height cannot be located in the setbacks. Is the tank filter located under ground? Where is the pool equipment? If the ponds are over 18" deep they will require fencing per building code requirements. Please contact the Building and Safety Department for more information on pool/pond fencing requirements.
- 7. Parking OK
- 8. Building Height OK
- 9. Solar Height OK
- 10. Open Yard Call out the required 1,250 square feet open yard area on the site plan.
- 11. Building Separation OK
- 12. Fences, Walls, Screens, and Hedges Call out the height and materials of all fences, hedges and walls. In order to permit the fences outside the property lines, we will require permission from the neighboring property owners.
- 13. Trash Enclosure N/A
- 14. FYI. The archive plans show the existing residence (bathroom addition) was 20 feet to the property line, and outside the required setback. The current plans show the bathroom as approximately 9 feet to the property line. No changes such as new windows and doors can be made to these non-conforming areas in the setbacks.

Resubmittal Plan Check 2/22/06 - Brenda Beltz

- 1. Please indicate a slope of 21% on the plans, instead of the 19% as shown.
- 2. The project as proposed will require three modifications:
- a) The proposed workshop is located in the front yard and no accessory building other than a garage can be located in the front yard. See SBMC 28.87.160

This is a revised project: Proposal to add 597 square feet to an existing 2,519 square foot single family residence on a 40,489 square foot lot in the Hillside Design District. Also proposed is the demolition of an existing 254 square foot workshop and a new 370 square foot workshop and a new 694 square foot attached garage.

Activities: Disp Date 1 Date 2 Date 3

- b) The open yard area is shown incorrectly on the plans. It cannot be located in the front yard. The open yard area is behind the house. The new additions encroach into the open yard and will require a modification.
- c) The "existing" as-built chain link 5' fence is over the maximum 3.5' height limit within 10' of the front property line and will require a modification. The archive plans show that a 4' chain link fence was constructed around the pool area only, NOT around the entire perimeter of the lot.

Please set up an appointment with Roxanne Milazzo to discuss the feasibility of a modification.

- 3. The archive plans show that the pool equipment was originally proposed 5' from the edge of the pool and not 18' as shown. The pool equipment is now located in the required setback which is not allowed. Please show the pool equipment and new proposed screen walls to be moved outside the setback and include in your scope of work.
- 4. The existing ponds and walls were not constructed with permits. Please provide details and add to the scope of work.
- 5. The sink located inside the garage appears to encroach into the parking area. Please remove the sink.

3/15/06 Resubmittal Plan Check by Brenda Beltz 564-5470

- 1. Workshop in the front yard is OK because it is attached to the garage and main building by a breezeway and is therefore considered attached accessory.
- 2. Modifications applied for the overheight 5' fence along the front property line and the driveway, the pool equipment in the setback and the encroachment into the required open yard. Please show the required open yard area correctly. It cannot be located in the frontyard.
- 3. Review the location of the sink in the garage with Transportation Planning.

(F) Print Prelim Plan Check

PRNT

08/30/05

ENV-MEA Prep-NO action req

DONE

09/10/05

Soils Report prior to Bldg.

ABR-Concept Review (New) - PH

CONT

09/19/05

(COMMENTS ONLY; PROJECT REQUIRES ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION ORDINANCE FINDINGS.)

(6:36)

Gregory Rech, Architect; and Brian Milburn, Owner; present.

Motion: Continued indefinitely to the Consent Calendar with the following comments:

1) The project is ready for Preliminary Approval pending an Environmental Assessment. 2) Given the large size of the site, the addition is acceptable. 3) The existing encroachments are small in scale and of one-story nature. 4) The Board finds there are no aesthetic visual impacts. 5) The Board looks forward to the minimization of hardscape at the new motor court for additional turnaround area. 6) The applicant is to provide footprints of the adjacent structures. 7) Clearly delineate the required five-foot high fencing surrounding the pool. 8) Clearly define the grading. Action: Manson-Hing/Wienke, 6/0/0.

ABR-Mailed Notice Prepared

MAIL

09/19/05

ABR-Consent (Referred by FB)

APVD

09/26/05

(Preliminary Approval is requested.)

Preliminary Approval of the project and continued indefinitely with the finding that the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance criteria have been met as stated in Subsection 22.68.060 of the City of Santa Barbara Municipal Code.

ABR-Prelim Approval - Project

APVD

09/26/05

ABR-Resubmittal Received

RECD

02/03/06

This is a revised project: Proposal to add 597 square feet to an existing 2,519 square foot single family residence on a 40,489 square foot lot in the Hillside Design District. Also proposed is the demolition of an existing 254 square foot workshop and a new 370 square foot workshop and a new 694 square foot attached garage.

Activities: Disp Date 1 Date 2 Date 3

Took in resubmittal. Project has been significantly reduced from a two story addition to a one story addition due to soils report findings. At th last ABR meeting the project was continued to Consent.

(F) Print Prelim Plan Check

PRNT

02/22/06

ABR-Project HALTED

HALT

02/22/06

Halted to consult with Roxanne about mods for accessory in frontyard, reducing the open yard area, and overheight fences.

ABR-FYI/Research FYI 02/22/06

Contacted Greg Rech to let him know that the project has been "halted" prior to processing for ABR. Modifications are required.

Plans are in the Kelly's cubicle 'cause they were too big for the "halt" drawer at the zoning counter.

MHO-Correspondence/Contact

MTG

03/06/06

Office meeting with Greg Rech @ 966-7141

1. Project involves 3 as-built Mods, 1 proposed Mod, and abatement of outstanding building violations - ABR has seen the first floor improvments as a part of a previous 2-story addition that has been abandoned - No need to review as-built fence which is completely covered with vegetation - Fees quoted at 2,350.00 - Submittal appointment made for 3/14 - Ordered lables -

ABR-Resubmittal Received

RECD

03/14/06

Resubmittal received. Provided 3 sets of plans. 2nd floor addition previously shown to ABR has been deleted. First floor additions remain essentially the same. Some grading cut to remain on-site.

ABR-FYI/Research

FYI

03/20/06

Noticing: We will not re-notice this project due to its considerable reduction. K. Brodison in consultation with J. Limon.

ABR-Concept Review (Continued)

PEND

04/03/06

(PROJECT REQUIRES ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION ORDINANCE FINDINGS.)

(6:13)

Gregory Rech, Architect from Architects West, present.

Motion: Preliminary Approval as submitted with the finding that the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance criteria have been met as stated in Subsection 22.68.060 of the City of Santa Barbara Municipal Code, and continued indefinitely to the Consent Calendar for Final Approval.

Action: Mudge/Wienke, 5/0/0.

(F) Print ALL Actions of Case

04/04/06

PC-Tentative PC Hearing Date

FULL

04/12/06

PC-Tentative PC Hearing Date

SHO

04/12/06